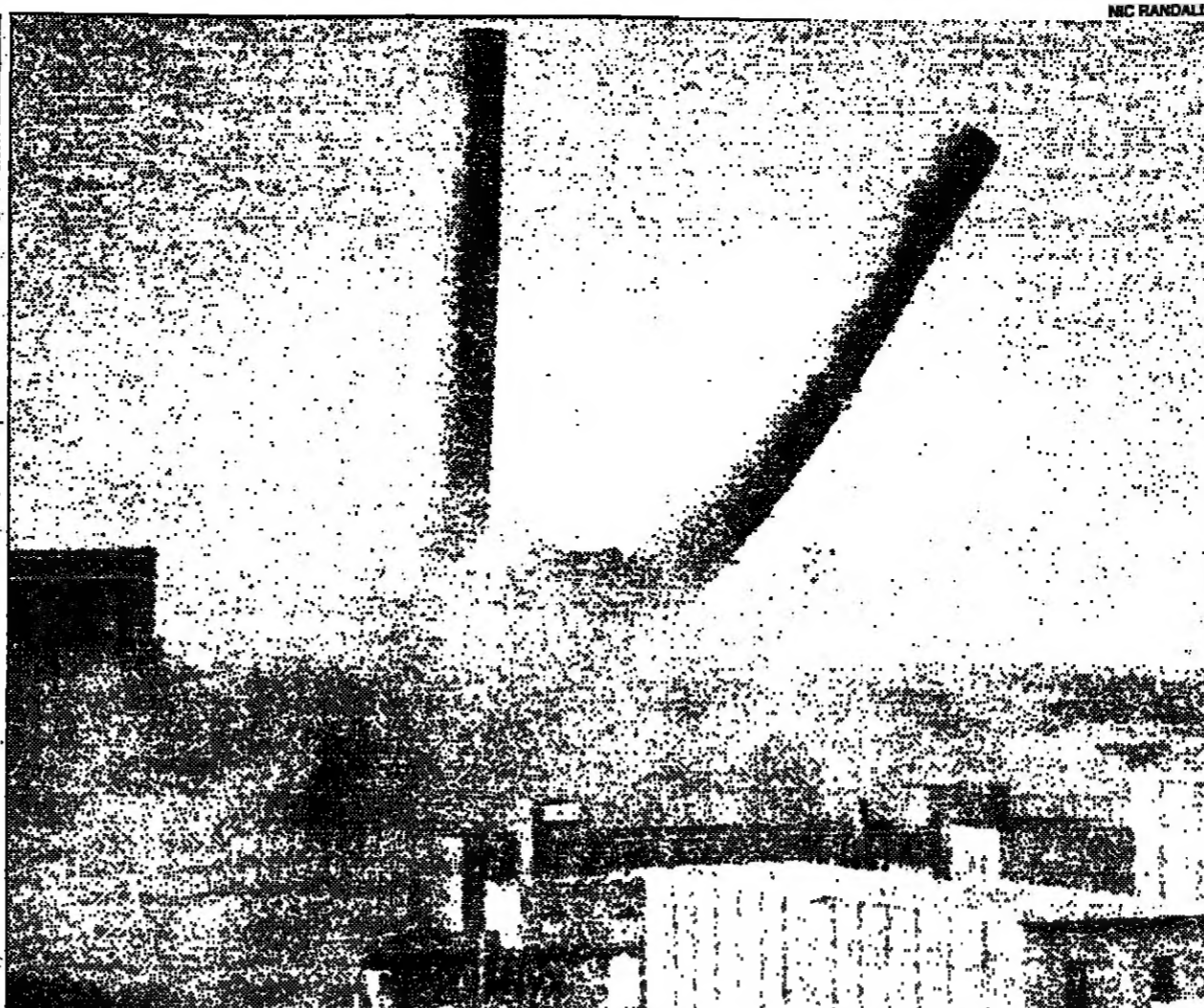


Most state schools plan sports lessons cuts, says survey

By JOHN GOODBODY AND JOHN O'LEARY

AT LEAST 70 per cent of state schools are planning to cut sports lessons, according to a survey to be published today. The enquiry by the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) and the Secondary Heads Association has had replies from 1,800 schools. The statistics will add to the debate on the future of school sport in a national curriculum. One of the most worrying facts is that schools reported a 20 per cent decline in the teaching of swimming, largely due to financial constraints. Peter Lawson, secretary of the CCPR, which represents the national governing bodies of sport, said yesterday that the report was "extremely worrying". Only 200 of the 2,000 schools sent questionnaires did not reply. Concern about the state of school

sport has led to pressure on John MacGregor, the education secretary, to reconsider a proposal to make physical education voluntary beyond the age of 14, and even to pay teachers overtime through the Sports Council to arrange games out of school hours. An article in *The Mail on Sunday* put the cost of such a scheme at £250 million. The report comes as the government's working party on physical education prepares to deliver its preliminary advice to the education department in December. The National Curriculum Council meets on Wednesday to consider the content of subjects in the 14-16 age group. It is not expected to address the status of physical education until the working party has reported. The education department said yesterday that ministers would await the council's verdict. No comment would be made on spending plans until after the government's autumn statement. Mr Lawson said that there seemed to be a new mood in the government in favour of increasing participation in sport, particularly in schools. "Both John Major and Chris Patten are sports enthusiasts," he said. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that any extra payment for sports teachers would have implications for teachers' contracts generally. "I would be extremely unhappy about it because it would be such a bit of a problem," he said. "It isn't just sport that has been affected. Clubs and societies, music and art were all areas where pressure on the timetable was relieved by running activities outside the school day." With the spread of sports centres he said: "We need to consider whether state schools any longer are the best places to deliver the whole range of sporting activities that are available elsewhere."



Chimney stacks crumble during the demolition yesterday of Plymouth power station, during which Lionel Cooper, aged 46, of Staddiscombe, Plymouth, who later died, received rib injuries when struck by a large piece of steel. One of the chimneys fell into a rain-soaked quarry, throwing mud in the air. Gales alert, page 1

Football hooligan policy is criticised

By OUR SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE government's line on football hooliganism was yesterday attacked by two specialists ahead of the publication of a report by soccer supporters. The report on the World Cup by the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) is likely to be critical of the treatment of England followers by the Italian police and the Italian police. Although the 20,000-word report, which is expected to be published within the next three months, is still being collated, a leading member of the FSA yesterday outlined his criticisms of the arrangements in Italy. John Tunnon, the joint FSA World Cup convenor, blamed Colin Moylan, the former sport minister, for stressing to the Italian authorities the need for "coercive measures" to control the English. "As a result, their civil liberties were curbed," Mr Tunnon said. "Moylan gave the Italians the impression that English supporters were hooligans." Mr Tunnon said that one particular sore point was an incident in Rimini when scores of innocent English supporters were rounded up after fighting had broken out outside bars on the seafront. Last week, the FSA received a letter from the Italian ministry of the interior, which appears to have revoked the deportation order on 246 English supporters flown back to Britain under guard. The Centre for Football Research at Leicester university is also bringing out a report on the behaviour of supporters at the World Cup, part of a five-country European study into hooliganism at the competition. This has yet to be concluded although one of the three researchers, Adrian Goldberg, who stayed with English supporters in Italy, has attacked the role of Mr Moylan and the National Football Intelligence Unit for identifying Dutch and English supporters as the most likely to cause trouble. However, this was just Mr Goldberg's opinion and the report, sponsored by the government, has yet to receive other researchers' views.

NUJ settles dispute with its secretary

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE National Union of Journalists (NUJ) has reached a settlement with its general secretary elect that should end the deadlock in union affairs which followed his surprise victory in an election in July. Steve Turner, the letters editor of the *Daily Mirror*, had demanded the same terms and conditions of employment as Harry Conroy, his predecessor, whom he defeated by 3,586 votes to 2,346. Mr Conroy, who is now director of the

Campaign for a Scottish Assembly, was able to leave the NUJ with two years' pay and the use of a union car until March. The package was worth nearly £70,000.

The terms Mr Turner has now accepted include a £3,500 increase on his £30,600 annual salary in place of a car, which would have cost the union £5,500. He will also get two years' severance pay if he loses his job in mid-term for any reason other than gross misconduct. If he is dismissed for misconduct or alleges constructive dismissal, he will be suspended on full pay for up to a year until the issue is settled in the courts.

As a concession to the union, Mr Turner has agreed that if he loses office in a quinquennial election he will have only 17 months' severance pay, seven months' less than Mr Conroy. The union's national executive accepted the settlement by a vote of 11 to one on Saturday, and has cancelled plans for a fresh ballot in which Mr Turner was to have been opposed by Jake Ecclestone, deputy general secretary of the union.

Sea burial bodies float back

A FRESH look at the way in which bodies at sea are carried out is being demanded after bodies have reappeared off the Cornish coast.

Derrick Pepperell, West Cornwall coroner, wants conditions of sea burials re-examined after a body was found by fishermen in Mount's Bay, Cornwall, part of which is designated for such burials. It is the latest in a series of similar incidents.

Mr Pepperell said: "There have been a steady trickle of sea burials in the bay, and it is fine as long as they do not come back up. I will write to the Ministry of Agriculture to arrange to have something organised so they do not come to the surface again."

Peter Wilkinson, a ministry spokesman, which gives licences for sea burials, said: "I will wait and see if anything needs changing in the regulations when I hear from the people concerned."

Ludovic Kennedy, the writer and broadcaster, has said that he wants to be buried at sea. The former naval lieutenant, aged 70, is now a director of a company that specialises in sea burials.

Fraud squad quiz Wimpey directors

By RONALD FAUX

FRAUD squad officers on Merseyside are investigating links between a senior employee of Wimpey, the construction company, and the former Militant leadership on Liverpool city council over land deals in the city.

The police confirmed yesterday that Alan Worthington, executive director of Wimpey in the North-West and Scotland, and Geoffrey Slater, his predecessor, were among 22 people arrested on Friday. Twenty were later released on police bail during Operation Cheetah, a large-scale investigation into fraud involving land owned by the council. They were not charged with any offences.

The Liverpool headquarters of Wimpey were raided by police and documents removed. The premises of two property companies, Tentigo and Sterling Land and Property, were also searched.

Among those arrested was Derek Hutton, the former deputy leader of the city council who runs Settle, a public relations and property development consultancy in Liverpool. Wimpey is understood to have employed Settle as marketing consultants after Mr Hutton left the council in 1986.

A spokesman for Wimpey said yesterday: "Until we know the full nature of the investigation we shall not be in a position to comment."

Two men arrested on Friday during Operation Cheetah are to appear before Liverpool magistrates today charged with handling stolen goods. Their names were not released. Merseyside police said the alleged offence was not connected with the fraud investigation.

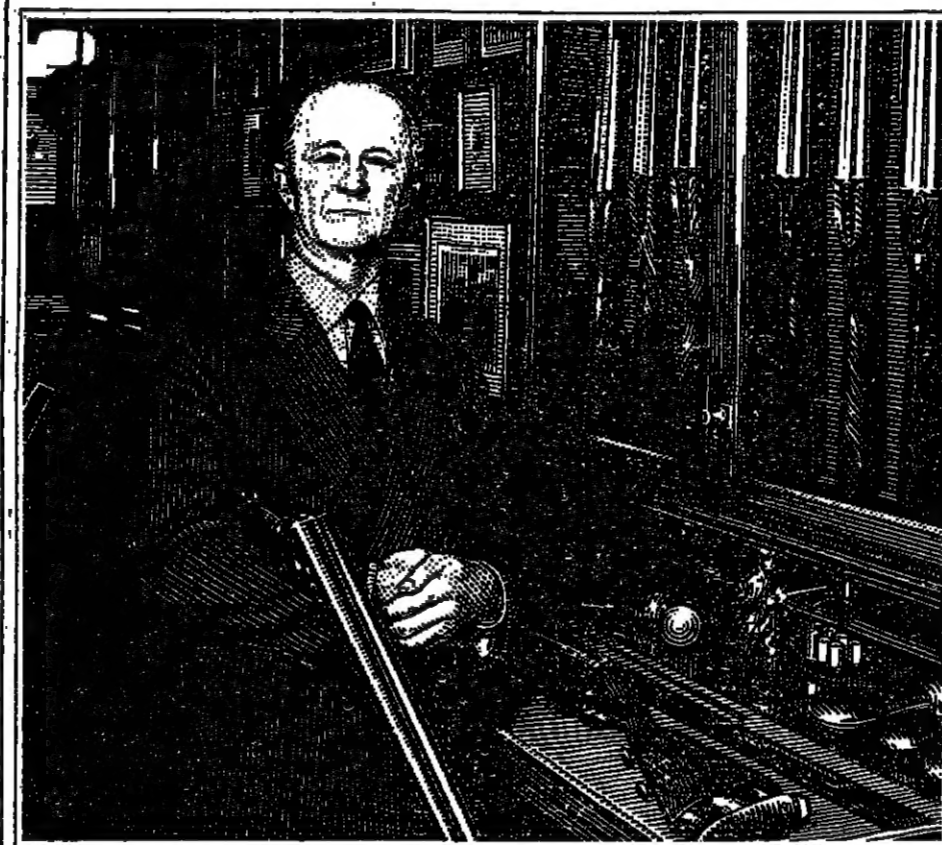
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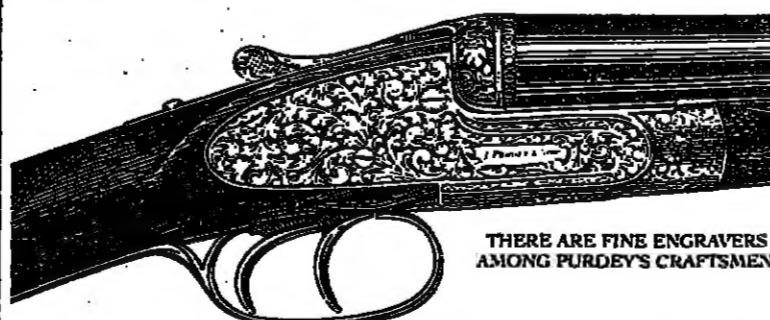
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Purdey guns have been taking their time since 1814.

Three years could pass before a sportsman sets his sights on owning a Purdey gun. That is how long it could take from order to delivery. But any expert on fine guns would reckon it time well spent.



THERE ARE FINE ENGRAVERS AMONG PURDEY'S CRAFTSMEN.

As Chairman of James Purdey and Sons, the Honourable Richard Beaumont is supremely qualified to confirm this view. And in the Long Room of Purdey's headquarters the evidence is there, all around him.

A Georgian silhouette of the first James Purdey, a barrel-maker in the City of London, looks towards the portrait of 'James the First' who founded the family firm in 1814. Since then, Purdeys have been gun-makers to the Royal Household from Queen Victoria to the present day.

But time has not stood still at Purdey. It has

moved with measured precision. The latest example

of the work that makes the name Purdey synonymous with perfection is, like every Purdey gun, built to the personal measurements and sporting requirements of one individual. It is an extension of the shooter's arm.

Purdey make only 60 or 70 guns a year and it takes several men many months to make just one gun. But each man is a specialist and each part of the gun is engraved with the craftsman's own initials.

Richard Beaumont also shares this sense of pride in work well done. "Hand-made things have a different quality. They have been created by someone, not by a machine."

For this reason he has complete confidence in his Rolex watch, which he describes with quiet appreciation as "a lovely thing."

When handling one of his own guns or when consulting the watch on his

wrist, Richard Beaumont knows that he is in touch with the kind of qualities which he most admires: personal skills that can coax the highest degree of efficiency and beauty from basic materials.

Purdey guns and Rolex watches both take time and expertise to create. But above all, they are fashioned by people who still care to do things well for people who can recognise that care has been taken.



DETONATING AN ACTION.

Harris tweed sheds its hairy image for a gossamer touch

By KERRY GILL

THE Harris tweed industry, hit by one of the worst slumps in its history as the fashion industry craves lighter and more delicate wools, could be saved by the development of a new "gossamer" weave, said to be as soft as cashmere.

The "super lightweight" tweed, almost half the weight of the traditional variety, is being produced by Bruce Burns from his Stornoway mill in the Outer Hebrides. After showing samples in Paris earlier this month, praise has flooded in from London, Paris, Tokyo and New York.

Development of the new weave is expected to start a new era for the Harris tweed industry which, over the past year, has suffered closures and part-time working as orders, particularly from America, have dried up. The industry provides the biggest single source of income for almost 600 crofters on the island of Lewis and Harris.

The "gossamer" tweed qualifies for the Harris tweed

orb, the industry's trademark, which can be used only if the garment is made wholly from Scottish wool and carded, spun and woven by islanders in their own crofts.

Mr Burns retired as managing director of a Harris tweed company two years ago but, after a survey indicated that people wanted a much lighter and softer cloth, he came out of retirement to set up a new factory in Stornoway this summer. Others in the industry doubted whether such a light cloth could be produced by traditional methods.

Within three months, however, Mr Burns had exhibited the gossamer weave to 43,000 people at Premier Vision, the Paris trade show. "Harris tweed has always been a cloth used by gamekeepers and country people, but I have always tried to develop a lighter cloth," Mr Burns said.

"Because of the demand in the fashion scene for lighter and softer fabrics, I opened up in July and installed new

machinery to make the tweed. I set a target figure, and gossamer is 25 per cent lighter than any other Harris tweed.

"It does not look like Harris tweed, but it qualifies for the orb. The response has been amazing and clothes made from it should start coming on to the market within the next two to three months. We want to promote a different image of Harris tweed." Mr Burns employs eight people at his mill but, because of the huge demand for the new weave, expects to start taking on more workers next year.

The image of Harris tweed as heavy and hairy, if robust, has done the cloth few favours in a market favouring lighter, more comfortable materials, and the all-important American market had recently turned against wools. If the product was right, though, sales would begin to climb again, Mr Burns said. More use of air-conditioning had also encouraged the move towards lighter fabrics.

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THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE

Patten faces tough task in squaring emission cuts

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A LONG-STANDING disagreement between Britain and its European Community partners over how to counter global warming will come to a head in Luxembourg today as officials from more than 100 countries gather in Geneva to discuss a world treaty to protect the atmosphere.

Chris Patten, the environment secretary, will need all his negotiating skills in the Grand Duchy if he is to avoid a breach with other EC countries over a common target for limiting emissions of the principal greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO₂) from coal-fired power stations and vehicles.

At today's meeting of community environment ministers, Mr Patten will not move from Britain's commitment to stabilise CO₂ emissions at present levels by 2005, in spite of increasing pressure for him to accept the EC Commission's 2000 target, which is supported by Germany, Denmark, The Netherlands and France. At meetings of the environment council in March and

June, a serious dispute was avoided only by delaying a decision, but it can be put off no longer.

A common community position is considered vital to the success of the World Climate Conference, which opens in Geneva this morning, the ministerial session of which will be launched a week tomorrow with a speech by Margaret Thatcher. The aim of the conference is to set the international community on a path towards a comprehensive agreement on limiting the industrial gases causing the greenhouse effect. Many observers feel that only the EC can give it the necessary political impetus, as the United States, the Soviet Union and developing nations are all reluctant to acknowledge the potential economic consequences of controlling CO₂.

The gap between Britain's 2005 date and the 2000 target of its partners may prove impossible to bridge. Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland feel that the 2000 target is too much to ask of them as they are at a much lower level of industrialisation. They may be put in a separate category but the northern European countries feel that Britain could, and should, move to their position. If no agreement can be found, the environment ministers concerned, Klaus Töpfer from Germany, Lone Dybkjaer from Denmark, Hans Alders from The Netherlands, and Brice Lalonde from France, are likely to make their feelings public. This would do considerable damage to Britain's environmental image.

There is an appreciation in these governments that negotiations are sticking not with Mr Patten personally but with Mrs Thatcher, who is concerned that an earlier British target could damage the forthcoming electricity privatisation by implying that fewer units of electricity are likely to be sold by the newly privatised utilities.

A 5,000 signature petition was handed in yesterday at 10 Downing Street, calling for urgent action to curb the threat of global warming. It was delivered by members of the United Nations Association, a voluntary organisation seeking to realise UN ideals.

Gould urges joint stance over UK line

By NICHOLAS WATT

EUROPEAN Community environment ministers should agree a negotiating position before today's EC environmental council meeting to prevent the British government from vetoing proposals for a freeze on carbon dioxide emissions by 2000, Bryan Gould, Labour's environment spokesman, said yesterday.

In a letter to the ministers, he said that the government was "isolated" on the world stage and accused Mrs Thatcher and Chris Patten, the environment secretary, of "obdurate refusal" to adopt the EC targets of a freeze in CO₂ emissions by 2000. British policy is to stabilise the emissions by 2005.

The environment department rejected Mr Gould's claims and said that the EC commission was "out to provoke a squabble".

British Rail arouses European envy

By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

COMMUTERS accustomed to criticising the railways for high fares, unpredictable services and antiquated rolling stock would be astonished to discover that Continental rail managers are asking British Rail's advice about how to run their rail networks.

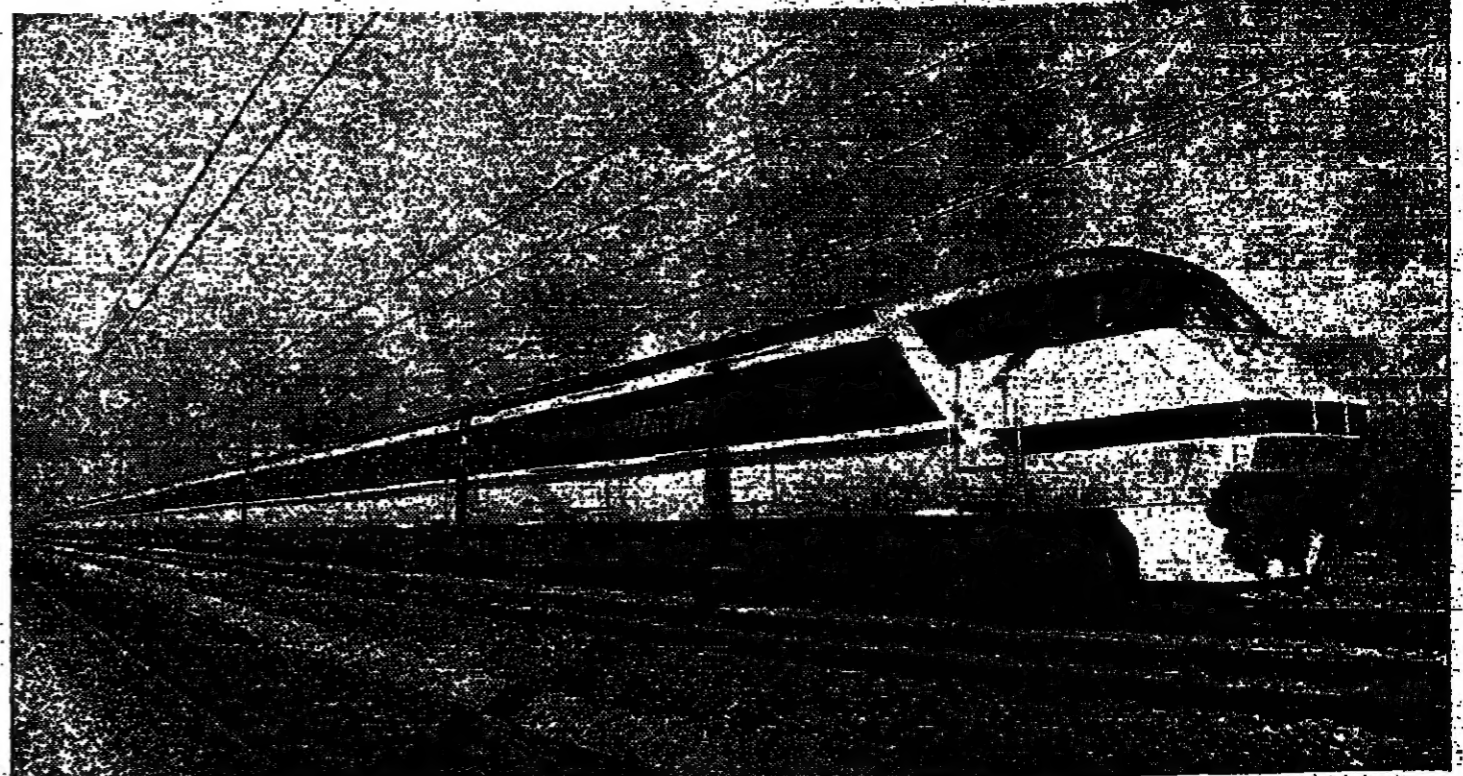
During the past 12 months, a succession of French, Spanish, Swiss, and Dutch rail managers have arrived in London to find out how British Rail emerged from the 1980s with one of the highest productivity levels and one of the lowest operating costs among railways in Europe.

Continental rail managers do not share what appears to be the British public's low opinion of British Rail. On the contrary, British Rail's ability to provide long-distance, commuter and cross-country services, without huge government subsidies, and at a fraction of Continental costs, is hailed as miraculous.

Since reorganisation in 1982, which saw the introduction of InterCity, Network SouthEast, Provincial, Railfreight Distribution and Parcels, British Rail has been forced to work in a commercial environment. Subsidies have been cut, costs reduced, productivity has been boosted and the real cost of running the railway progressively shifted to the user. The gradual transition from a lumbering state-owned monopoly, cushioned by the taxpayers' largesse, to market-sensitive public enterprise, left to its own devices, has been painful and controversial.

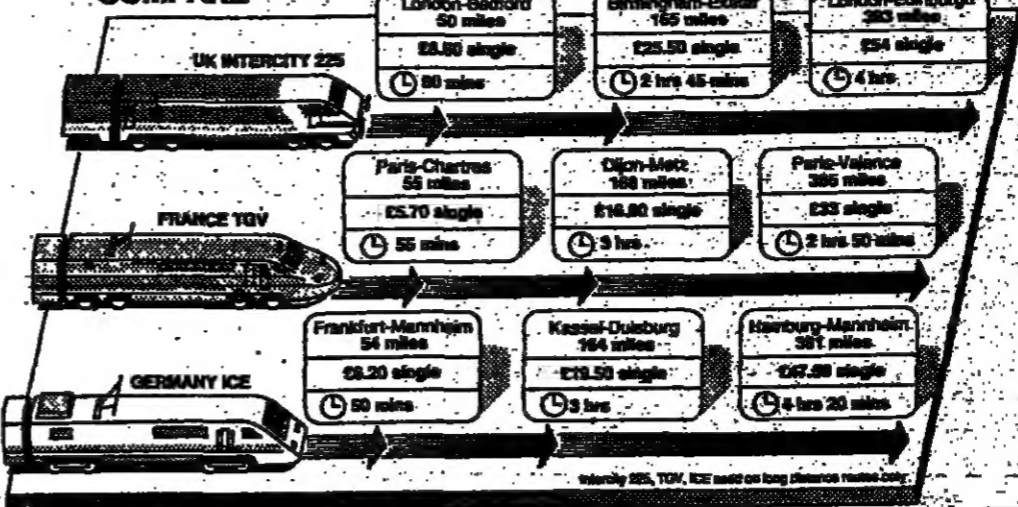
Rail managers have had to learn the disciplines of the market, while enduring the wrath of commuters faced with successive fare increases — sometimes without any improvement in services. Simultaneously, opposition parties have challenged the wisdom of subsidy reductions and fare increases at a time when growing environmental concerns have placed a premium on the promotion of public over private transport.

The Community of European Railways, representing Europe's rail authorities, says British Rail gets a subsidy of £1.44 for every train kilometre (0.62 of a mile) worked, compared to £5.94 in Germany and £6.70 in France. But British Rail has reduced its operating costs to £7.69 per kilometre worked, compared to £13.87 in Germany and £12.01 in France. As a result, ticket prices for British Rail's long-distance, commuter, and cross-country journeys are higher than those for



British Rail's InterCity 225 speeding from Leeds to London at the weekend. "Best value for money among high-speed trains"

HOW THE RAILWAYS COMPARE



British Rail's flagship InterCity 225 begins services between London and Edinburgh in May. Journey times will be reduced to four hours. The French TGV can complete a similar journey in two hours 50 minutes, while Germany's InterCity Express (ICE) will take longer.

According to Roger Ford, technical editor of *Modern Railways*, "the InterCity 225 is by far the best value for money among Europe's new generation of high-speed trains". The InterCity 225 cost £9,000 a seat to develop and build, compared to £15,000 a seat for the TGV and £21,000 a seat for the ICE, he said.

The interest shown by Continental rail managers in British Rail's "commercial approach" to railway management is a testimony to the efficiency gains made during the 1980s. It is also a tacit admission that, in the face of declining government assistance, they too are being forced down a similar cost-cutting road.

Operating on the edge of efficiency, however, has drawbacks. A decline in economic activity can have a marked effect on passenger receipts, threatening long-overdue investment programmes. Efficiency gains tend to cut little ice with passengers, who have to put up with even longer waits, overcrowded, late and cancelled trains.

Fastest model railway? page 16

similar journeys in France or Germany, many of which are kept low by hefty government subsidies.

If British Rail had the £3 billion or so annual government subsidy given to French or German railway systems, instead of its present subsidy of about £500 million, ticket prices could be reduced to Continental levels with ease. However, British Rail officials say, the cost would be almost two pence on the basic rate of taxation, the loss of the financial discipline which has

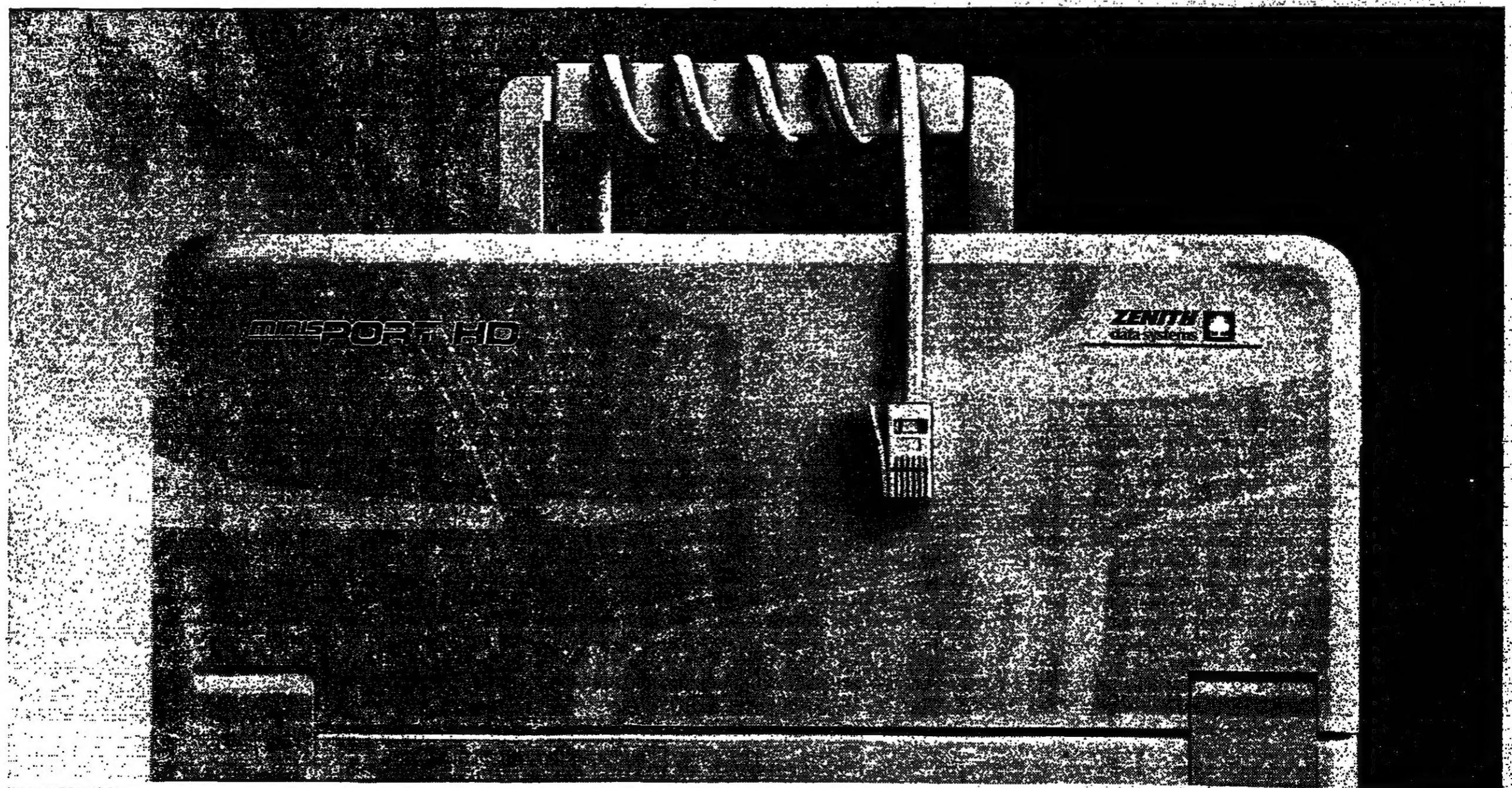
brought about productivity and efficiency gains, and a return to the anomalous situation in which, for example, low income groups in Manchester subsidise the journeys of affluent commuters in London.

Although squeezed between falling subsidies and the rigours of the market, British Rail has continued to match, and occasionally exceed, the performance of its Continental counterparts. International comparisons show that British Rail runs more high-speed trains, defined as over

100mph, than any other network in Europe, with the exception of France.

The scope for building high-speed railways like the French TGV & Grand Vitesse (TGV), which is commercially viable in its own right, is limited by the size and population density of Britain. Consequently, British Rail has focused on the more pragmatic task of running faster on existing tracks. British Rail leads the world in that technique, an achievement all but eclipsed by the glamour of the TGV. When

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Rome summit leaves Britain cast in role of EC double loser

FROM MICHAEL BRYNIN IN ROME



Jacques Delors, architect of economic and monetary union

BRITAIN was a double loser at the Rome summit. On issues where Margaret Thatcher wanted action, such as farm prices, little was said. On matters London wanted left until the December inter-governmental conferences, plans were agreed that virtually pre-empted all discussion.

The summit, originally called to discuss emergency aid to the Soviet Union, put off a decision until December, insisting that the Kremlin make a success of the economic reforms now being undertaken.

But the Twelve agreed that the situation in Eastern Europe was critical because of the huge oil price rise brought on by the Gulf confrontation. The community is to advance immediately a billion euros (£1.4 billion) scheduled for Hungary in November, and said it was determined to support democracy and stability there.

The community's failure to take a strong stand on the breakdown of talks on farm subsidy cuts was denounced by Mrs Thatcher as a failure to get to grips with the real problems facing the EC. But the Italians were determined to keep the discussion on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to a minimum: partly because they feared, correctly, that Britain would use the issue to ridicule steps to political union and partly because Giulio Andreotti, the Italian prime minister, did not want to alienate France and Germany, the two obstacles to agreement on Friday.

Their support for the setting of a

either on monetary or political union.

Ironically, Britain, which long resisted the calling of either conference, yesterday became the chief defender. It was there, Mrs Thatcher insisted, that decisions must be made, and the summit should not pre-empt the debate. In this she found some support, especially from Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands and other countries who have qualms about what they see as a Franco-German attempt, with Italian connivance, to have their own ideas dominate the future discussion.

Signor Andreotti denied there was a conspiracy by the "troika" of France, Germany and Italy to accelerate EC integration. "We did not set out to circumvent the difficulties, but rather to tackle them to allow the IGCs to start on a solid basis," he said.

But Helmut Kohl, the West German chancellor, explicitly confirmed that acceleration was indeed the aim, and President Mitterrand of France said progress on European integration could not be delayed by the speed of the slowest.

In the end, even Britain's friends abandoned her. The Danes, though angered by Italian tactics, agreed to go along with the setting of a starting date for economic and monetary union and to set out the aims of political union. To vote against that, they explained afterwards, would have looked like agreeing with the substance of British objections.

Other countries also having doubts were reluctant to join the British camp. Portugal insisted it would remain in line with its partners. Greece also committed itself to beginning stage two of the Delors plan in 1994 despite its crippling economic problems, while Ireland, whose doubts over closer defence co-operation made yesterday's outcome hard to follow, nevertheless said this could be squared with its traditional neutrality.

The main winner from the summit was Italy. All leading politicians here have reacted with fury to the charges of disorganisation and posturing. Gianni De Michelis, the expansive foreign minister, has been particularly hurt by accusations that the presidency has achieved little. Although he was one of the people originally advocating caution in handling Mrs Thatcher, her isolation was sweet revenge for him.

German Chancellor Kohl quietly demonstrated Germany's new muscle at the summit, the first since unification on October 3, and secured almost everything he wanted.

Herr Kohl said the bloc should press ahead towards full political union and indicated that Germany would play a key role in shaping the continent's future.

He managed to prevent detailed discussion of German and French objections to cuts in farm subsidies, which have prevented the community from agreeing proposals to put to the Uruguay Round of GATT world trade talks.

Other key decisions on proceeding with political union, rejecting separate deals to free Western hostages in Iraq, and renewing pledges of economic aid to the Soviet Union also went Germany's way. Herr Kohl, his self-confidence boosted by his success in bringing about unification largely on his own terms, dismissed suggestions that the community should aim only to become a more open and efficient economic bloc.

"For us Germans, it is important... that the main goal of future developments in Europe should be political union," he told a press conference.

Herr Kohl sketched out his vision of a federal Europe with a single currency, an independent central bank modelled on Germany's powerful Bundesbank, a strong parliament, and common defence and security policies. (Reuter)

Leading article, page 13



Summit talk: Giulio Andreotti, the Italian prime minister, centre, going over some points with Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, left, and the foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, after the European summit meeting in Rome yesterday

European leaders call for UN chief to make hostage-rescue mission

By MICHAEL BRYNIN

EUROPEAN leaders yesterday ruled out any government negotiations or Heath-type missions to rescue hostages in Iraq. Instead a declaration issued at the end of their summit meeting here asked the United Nations Secretary-General to visit Baghdad to negotiate the immediate departure of all hostages.

Reaffirming their solidarity in achieving the freedom of all foreign citizens trapped in Iraq and Kuwait, they denounced the "unscrupulous use" Iraq was making of them in an attempt to divide the international community. Such a manoeuvre, they said, was in contempt of the most basic humanitarian rules, and could only complicate a solution.

The declaration said: "They affirm their determination not to send representatives of their governments in any capacity to negotiate with Iraq the release of foreign hostages, and to discourage others from doing so."

The Twelve EC members also expressed their deep concern at the continuing deadlock in the Gulf, the destructive occupation of Kuwait and the repeated violations of diplomatic conventions.

They promised "scrupulous adherence" to the UN embargo, and said they were ready to consider "additional steps in accordance with the UN charter".

In another declaration embracing all the current conflicts in the Middle East, they also said the lack of progress in the Arab Israeli dispute was "a source of deep concern". They called again on

Israel to live up to its international obligations on the treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories, and urged it to co-operate with the UN inquiry into the Temple Mount deaths.

"The tragic events that have occurred in Jerusalem show once more that the status quo in the occupied territories is unsustainable." They also deplored the tragic acts of violence against Israelis, and appealed for calm.

The EC leaders also condemned the continuing violence in Lebanon, called for full implementation of the Taif agreements, and full independence and sovereignty for Lebanon. They were ready to help reconstruct the country.

They welcomed the restoration of relations between the Twelve and Iran, and called for a strengthening of ties between the Arab world and Europe. The EC also gave cautious endorsement to an Italian proposal for a conference on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean, saying trust must be fostered in the region to establish stability, security, civil and political rights and to curb the arms race.

Meanwhile, President Mitterrand of France denied categorically that his government had made contacts with Iraq to resolve the Gulf conflict peacefully (Reuter writes).

Mitterrand, speaking at a news conference here, said there had been "no contact with Iraq, no delegation, no emissary".

French television said at the weekend that Claude Cheysson, the former French foreign minister, recently held secret talks with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, prompting Baghdad to announce the release of all French hostages. The 327 hostages are expected to fly to Paris today.

Iraq has said their release was a gesture to France for its constructive attitude to the conflict, which it compared to the "beating of war drums" by the United States and Britain.

France and its Gulf allies said the move was a crude attempt by Baghdad to divide the international coalition which insists Iraq withdraw from Kuwait and release all foreign hostages.

"I say it to all of you... no mission, no delegate, no commission. France has kept to its obligations," Mitterrand said at the end of the EC summit.

Newspapers in Italy, which currently holds the revolving presidency of the EC and initiated the summit declaration, have suggested that France has been dealing with Baghdad behind its partners' backs.

"Of course all this arises because the French hostages are to be given back. I suppose that since certain countries have not had the same gesture, questions have been posed. But Iraq has its own reasons," Mitterrand said. "If anyone says we have had contacts or an envoy... I say no!"

Individuals who went to Baghdad last month and succeeded in securing the release of a few French hostages "were French but had nothing to do with the government or with me," he added.

ATHENS: Greece said yesterday that Iraq had allowed 10 Greek hostages with health problems to leave the country, leaving 14 others and four diplomats behind.

Gulf stance, page 10



Heath: his private visit won freedom for ailing hostages

Appeal for Rwanda backing

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN ROME

BELGIUM has asked France, Germany and the Netherlands to help in the setting up of a proposed African intervention force for Rwanda, the Belgian prime minister, Wilfried Martens, said on the sidelines of the European Economic Community summit.

Rwanda has asked the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to put together a force to police a ceasefire between Rwandan government troops and rebels who entered the country from neighbouring Uganda at the beginning of the month.

Mr Martens said he had received a telephone call from the OAU secretary-general, Salim Ahmed Salim, saying that European aid was essential for the setting up of such a force.

The Belgian prime minister,

who reaffirmed that in any event, the Belgian paratroops will leave Rwanda on Thursday, said such aid could take the form of financial or logistical help, although the OAU had not yet stated exactly what kind and how much help it would like. According to Mr Martens, the request could be for 20 jeeps and three helicopters.

He did not indicate what the response had been to the Belgian request to the other three European states, saying only that a country has indicated to us that for it to be able to send military aid, it needed the approval of parliament.

The Belgian government has said it is withdrawing 535 paratroops it sent when the troubles started in order to protect Belgian nationals. A ceasefire was sup-

posed to have gone into effect in Rwanda Wednesday, but the fighting is reported to have continued.

Five Christian missionary nuns trapped in northern Rwanda since early this month have been evacuated. A French nun was brought out first by the French embassy in Uganda. The other four nuns, three of them Spanish and one Chilean, all of the Catholic Missionaries of Christ Jesus, said later in Merama Hills, Uganda, that they had been treated well by the rebels, who had written to the Ugandan authorities to allow them to travel to Kigali through the Ugandan border post of Katuna.

They said there were no more foreigners left in the rebel-held areas of northern Rwanda, but there were about 5,000 local people in rebel areas.

Deadlock as strike paralyses Hungary

FROM ERNEST BECK IN BUDAPEST

HUNGARY slipped deeper into political and economic trouble yesterday as the country faced a fourth day of almost total paralysis, with public transport halted and many border crossings blocked. Talks between the government and striking taxi and lorry drivers appeared to be deadlocked.

Although the drivers, who are demanding the reversal of recent petrol price rises, lifted their blockade yesterday to allow through a trickle of traffic and supplies on main roads and across Danube bridges in Budapest, they remained parked near by, ready to resume their protests if the talks break down.

The government, which first refused to consider revoking the decision, has already caved in and is offering a compromise deal involving a two-tier system with lower prices for drivers and weaker buyers of society, like the elderly and unemployed. But the taxi unions say they are holding out for a 12p across the board cut

to bring prices down to 50p per litre.

The climbdown has reinforced the view that the taxi blockade has grown from a limited work stoppage to a general expression of discontent over economic policies, and has tapped a widespread feeling that the government cannot stop the country from sliding further into financial chaos. "We cannot respect and trust such a government because it has no coherent policies," said one taxi driver who joined hundreds of others parked outside the parliament building.

The government maintains that the blockade is an "illegal act" carried out by a minority which is "terrorising" the nation and has accused the opposition party, the Alliance of Free Democrats, of supporting the strike and bringing the country close to collapse. Geza Jeszensky, the foreign minister, yesterday raised the possibility that Arpad Goncz, the president, might be brought before the constitutional court because he

appealed to the government to temporarily suspend the price rises.

Panic buying and hoarding on Friday has left most food shops empty and the authorities say there is only a three to four day supply of petrol, prompting fears that the stoppage could lead to social unrest.

Emotions are running high. Yesterday several thousand noisy pro-government demonstrators converged on parliament and the labour ministry, where the talks are taking place, chanting: "Long live the government" and "Give the people back the bridges."

One woman in the crowd denounced the Free Democrats and other "liberal Jewish scum" for causing the crisis and said the people would not tolerate a Jewish government.

So far police have been able to keep order although some people have voiced concern that clashes could break out if the blockade continues during the week. President Goncz has said he would not

under any circumstances call in the army to end the strike.

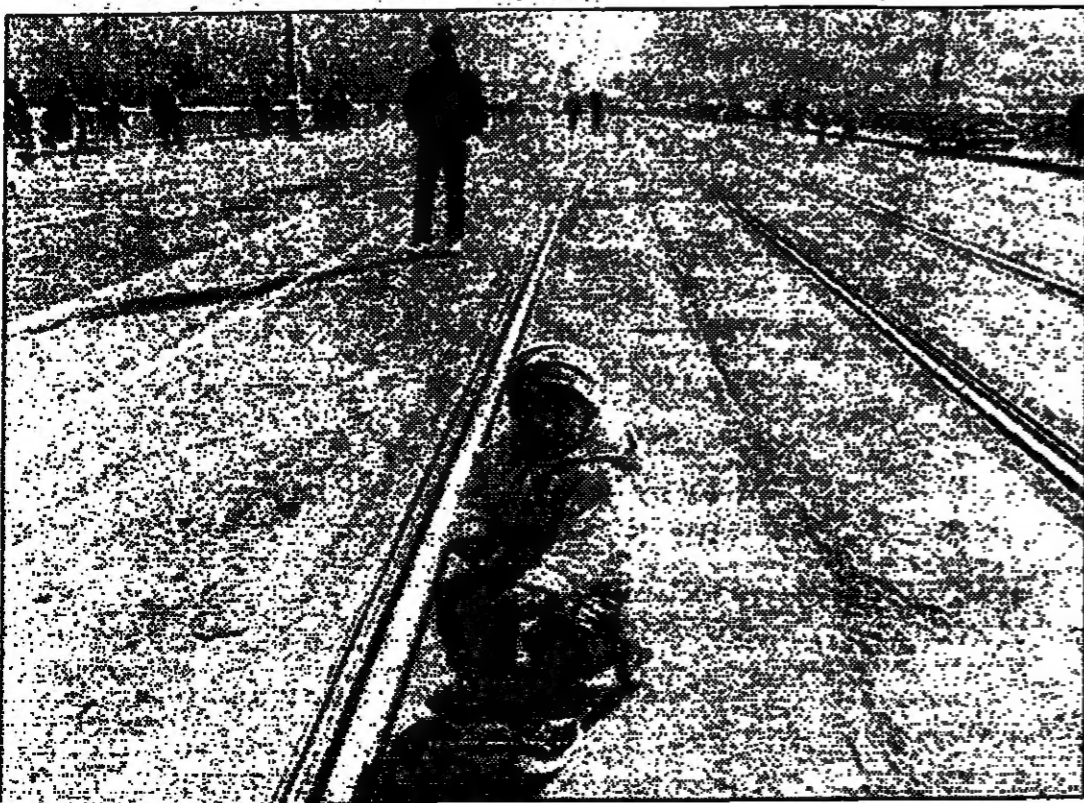
Sympathy for the stoppage is still strong. Many people came out over the weekend to set up mobile soup kitchens in the streets to feed the drivers.

Hungary's image abroad as the most stable nation among the new central European democracies, and the most promising for Western investors, is likely to suffer dramatically.

Mr Jeszensky told journalists that the strike had grave implications for the country's prestige. "What is at stake is not only the creation of a market economy but our fragile democracy," he said.

Inflation and rising prices were a natural result of the attempt to transform the state control economy to a market one.

The crisis has been compounded by the virtual absence of Jozsef Antall, the prime minister, who is in hospital for what has been described as a minor operation and has not been seen in public since the strike began.



Safe streets: a child rides her tricycle between the tram lines on the Arpad bridge in Budapest, secure in the knowledge that all traffic has been halted by the strike



Sometimes it takes more than faith to move mountains.

It takes votes.

So when Members of Parliament vote on Dog Registration tonight they might like to consider the following:

Thousands of unwanted dogs are still being put down every week.

There are still 500,000 homeless strays roaming our streets; fouling pavements, causing accidents.

Most concerned commentators believe a registration scheme would help solve the problem.

The Police Federation, the National Association of Dog Wardens, the N.E.U., the Country Landowners Association, the Association of District Councils, the W.I., the Townswomen's Guilds and animal welfare groups are all in favour.

As indeed are the vast majority of Britain's 6 million dog owners. (In a recent survey, over 90% of those aware of the issue supported a registration scheme.)

Sadly, dog cruelty is on the increase and the dogs can't speak for themselves.

But the message from the public is loud and clear: Registration is better than extermination.



Handwritten note: 10/11/90

Labour ousted by National party in New Zealand

FROM RICHARD LONG IN WELLINGTON

NEW Zealand's National party swept to victory in this weekend's elections, winning a 39-seat majority in parliament, the biggest ever achieved.

Jim Bolger, the National party leader, becomes the country's fourth prime minister in 15 months.

Nearly half the Labour cabinet were ousted as the National party won 68 seats in the 97-seat single chamber parliament. Labour took 28 and the New Labour party one.

After six years in power, Labour was routed in an overall swing of 10 per cent. Individual swings were much higher in Wellington, and Auckland, which turned savagely against the government.

While public opinion polls for two years had shown the government to be trailing badly, the extent of the defeat astounded many. In all, the government lost eight of its 20 cabinet ministers, several other ministers, the parliamentary speaker, his deputy and both whips.

The loss of the west coast seat of the speaker, Sir Kerry Burke, was a particularly wounding rebuff for the Labour party, which was spawned in the coal mines and industry of the region. Labour's caucus has not been as small since 1931 — before the first Labour government came to power.

Mike Moore, the outgoing prime minister, even had trouble conceding on election night. He phoned so early, just two hours after the polls had

closed, that Mr Bolger was not on hand to take the call.

Mr Bolger, declaring the win to be "quite emotional, quite humbling," urged all New Zealanders to work together to address the tremendous problems facing the country.

He said he would hasten the usual 14-day transition period, name a cabinet, probably on Wednesday, and take power by the end of the week. He said parliament would be called together before Christmas so that important legislation, including plans for labour market reform, could be introduced.

He promised to "open the books" a phased unveiling of government briefings papers to make public the extent of the economic situation — details which went undebated during the election campaign.

The new prime minister, who is 55, is a farmer, the son of Irish immigrants, a Catholic father of nine and a conservative.

With his Irish farming background, his pedestrian campaigning style and his "Hicksville" seat in the remote North Island hill country, he has been nicknamed "Potato Head" after some unfortunate caricatures. Even his aircraft used during the election campaign became known as "Spud One".

But for all these taunts, his uninspiring manner and his habit of tripping over words, Mr Bolger is respected by colleagues. He is very much a

family man, and will be the third practicing Roman Catholic prime minister in predominantly Protestant New Zealand.

A measure of Mr Bolger's conservative quaintness lies with his refusal to travel with any female staff on any overnight assignment. He considers it could lead to unfortunate rumours.

Mr Bolger can be expected to reiterate the National party's belief in collective security and will move swiftly to improve relations with Washington, strained as a result of Labour's ban on visits by nuclear warships in 1985.

Political observers consider he will have problems, in a caucus of this size, in controlling factional differences. A battle over economic policy is being predicted already.

Mr Moore, who seized the Labour leadership only eight weeks ago in a desperate attempt to improve the government's fortunes, said he watched the fall of colleagues' seats with great sadness. But he had pride in what they and the fourth Labour government had been through and the reforms they had introduced.



Fighting talk: Ahmad Shah Masood, the strongest Afghan rebel commander, vowing to launch co-ordinated mujahedin assaults on weak government targets to end the stalemate in the decade-long Afghan civil war. He said, near Peshawar in Pakistan, that the United States had endorsed the new strategy

Poll violence as Bhutto candidates are swept aside

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN LAHORE

AFTER a crushing defeat in parliamentary elections, Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was also routed in local elections in all four provinces on Saturday. The polls — marred by widespread violence in which 36 people were killed and 107 others were wounded — have given the nine-party Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA) an overwhelming majority in the Punjab province.

The alliance is also in a comfortable position to form governments in coalition with some other smaller parties in three other provinces — Sindh, North West Frontier and Baluchistan. In the Punjab, the largest province, Ms Bhutto's party won only 11 of the 240 assembly seats. The IDA won 228 seats in the PPP's worst electoral defeat.

Although the PPP did not boycott the Saturday polls, most of its supporters did not vote, mainly because of frustration at losing the national assembly elections. Aitzaz Ahsan, a prominent PPP leader and one of the few party candidates who retained a national assembly seat, said voters had lost faith in the fairness of the polls. The PPP faced the most unexpected defeat in its stronghold in Sindh province, where it failed to

win a majority. In North West Frontier province, previously dominated by the PPP, the party was totally routed by a coalition of Awami National Party and the IDA.

At least nine people died in violence in Sindh. The worst incident was reported in the Nawabshah district where Muratza Jatoi, son of the caretaker prime minister, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, and who had defeated Asif Ali Zardari, the husband of Ms Bhutto, in the national assembly elections, escaped an attempt on his life in an armed ambush.

Mr Zardari, aged 38, was meanwhile yesterday sent to Karachi Central Jail when a court refused to extend his remand period. He is accused of abetting the abduction of a businessman for ransom.

By sweeping the local polls just three days after its triumph in the parliamentary polls the right-wing Islamic Democratic Alliance has now established a total political superiority.

There are clear indications that the alliance will elect Nawaz Sharif, aged 41, as its candidate for the prime minister when the newly elected national assembly meets for its inaugural session next week.

Security alert in mosque dispute

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

HUNDREDS of thousands of security forces have mounted the biggest security operation in Uttar Pradesh, northern India, since independence in an attempt to protect a small, rundown mosque in the holy city of Ayodhya tomorrow.

Hindu hardliners are threatening to storm the unfinished 16th century building, which is hidden amid a maze of dusty roads in Ayodhya's teeming bazaars. At least 3,000 people are believed to have been arrested in Lucknow, the state capital and Mulayam Singh Yadav, the chief minister, has told the 250,000-strong security force on duty "not to hesitate in firing to quell the mob".

The dispute is one of the most potentially dangerous communal issues to erupt in Uttar Pradesh, India's most densely populated state, where most of the country's 110 million Muslims live in squalor. Hindu zealots say 100,000 people have infiltrated the state to storm security lines tomorrow to try to knock down the mosque.

India's government, headed by Vishwanath Pratap Singh,

the prime minister, faces several critical tests over the next ten days as it struggles for survival. Mr Singh's leadership of the National Front, the five-party coalition that makes up the government, will be challenged on Sunday when the parliamentary party meets. Three days later the government will face a confidence motion in the Lok Sabha (lower house).

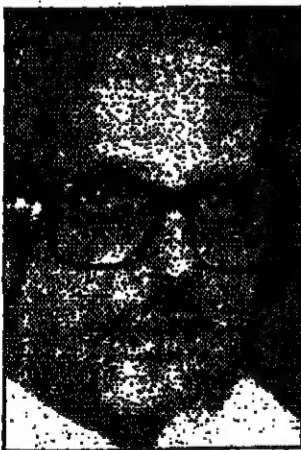
And hard decisions have yet to be made to cope with increased oil prices as the cost of basic goods soars.

Since the government cannot survive without the backing of the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, which has withdrawn the support of its 86 MPs over the mosque dispute, India faces either a general election or a radical political realignment.

Most MPs would prefer to avoid an election; President Venkataraman, a respected octogenarian with a steady influence over India's volatile political scene, might propose the formation of a national government to see the country through the caste and communal divisions.

Rajiv Gandhi, leader of the Congress (I) party, is the key figure in what happens next. So anxious is he to avoid an election that he would probably be willing to keep the government in power, so long as it was not headed by Mr Singh, an adversary who was once a cabinet colleague.

The final option, if all else fails, will be for President Venkataraman to call an election in late December or early next year. There is still a sense of political exhaustion after the last election less than a year ago; and there is deep fear that the emotions of another poll would unleash even greater communal and caste confrontations.



Singh: facing challenges to his leadership

Falklands plea on oil exploration

By ANDREW McEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Falkland Islands has asked the British government to declare a continental shelf around the islands so that it can sell licences for the exploration of oil and other minerals.

Its legislative council voted unanimously to request the change, which would extend British sovereignty to include a large area of seabed. William Fullerton, the governor, who presides over the council but does not vote, will pass it on to the Foreign Office. It may be seen as an embarrassment, creating a further issue on which Britain has to choose between displeasing the islanders or harming links with Argentina, which were restored in March.

If Britain accepts, Buenos Aires will doubt its seriousness about the more co-operative mood which has emerged. Argentina claims sovereignty over the islands and the seabed. A refusal would add to discontent in the

islands caused by Britain's unwillingness to extend the 150-mile fishing limit around the islands to 200 miles. A downturn in revenue from squid fishing licences, partly caused by the inadequacy of the limit, has increased the need for alternative income. Some geologists believe there may be large offshore oil or gas deposits, and coal onshore.

Whitehall sources described the question as "premature" on the ground that the islands' government has not yet passed legislation to permit exploration licences to be issued. But Ronald Sampson, the chief executive of the Falklands, said legislation was at an "advanced draft stage". He said: "The target is to see it passed before Christmas".

The shelf would follow a median line between the islands and Argentina. Elsewhere it would be determined by geological contours, in some places exceeding 200 miles.

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Renaissance man revisited

Colleen McCullough writes for pleasure but enjoys the profit.
Penny Vincenzi meets Australia's richest self-made woman

When Colleen McCullough is 80, you will recognise her easily. "I plan to terrify everyone to death, smoking black cigars and sitting with my legs apart, wearing pink bloomers. It is not my intention to be a sweet old lady," she said.

As she revealed this she was smoking "the mildest cigarettes you can buy" and sitting quite decorously in a pair of baggy trousers under a baggy tunic. Ms McCullough is on the English leg of the publicity tour for her new novel, *The First Man in Rome*, the first of five chronicling the events leading to the fall of the Roman Republic.

The First Man in Rome is not (for anyone who might have feared or hoped for such a thing) much like *The Thorn Birds*, her most famous novel. Ms McCullough does not, like so many mega-selling writers, lay a series of identically shaped golden eggs to make life more easily profitable for herself and her publishers. This is an exhaustively researched work of what the Americans call fiction. Indeed, so thoroughly researched is it that the glossary alone runs to 100 pages.

The book is, at various stages, hard work, exciting, moving, sexy and extremely gory, and she wrote it, she said, because she wanted to write a historical novel and there was no other period in history that had not been done to death. "If I see one more book about King Arthur," she said, "I'll spew."

Writing has made Ms McCullough a great deal of money. In particular, writing *The Thorn Birds* has made her a great deal of money. "But when I made it, I vowed I would never let money rule me." Which would mean?

"Which would mean I started to write for money. And that would necessitate an endless run of *Road to Thorn Birds*, *Son of Thorn Birds*, *Thorn Birds Three*. And I wasn't going to do that. All my books have been totally different. And it would also mean taking the money seriously, which I cannot do. I have an agent who worries about it, but I don't."

Nevertheless, she is happy to have it. "I am one of Australia's richest women. All of the others have inherited their money, so I," she said, with a touch of justifiable pride, "am known as Australia's richest self-made woman." And what does it do for her, being so rich, having self-made all that money? "Not a lot," she said. "It doesn't make you any happier. And you get soaked all along the way, especially when you're on your own. If you buy

'I have a disciplined bottom; all nurses are trained to walk fast and not wiggle their bottoms'

one to another. It was a very no-mad existence. And I was the only female in my family for generations. There was no feminine influence in our household whatsoever. My mother had nine brothers, my grandmother 15. And either you sat there dumb at the table, or you participated in the masculine conversation. I don't think I ever discovered feminine conversation."

She was, she said, a confident child. "I just don't know why. They were always trying to slap me down. I was altogether confident, socially as well. I went to a very posh school, but I never felt inferior to any of the other girls, even the ones from rich families. The posh school was a convent in Sydney, where she and her mother finally settled when she was 12. "I begged to go there, and she said, 'I can't afford it, so it's up to you'. I got a scholarship. I was always very ambitious. I just wanted to succeed at whatever I did, I didn't know what at."

This ambition did not extend to having children. "I always knew they would have retarded my career." Her one

clear ambition at this age was to be 6ft tall. "I wanted to look down on men. But I didn't make it."

She did make 5ft 10in, and is large with it. "But I do have a disciplined bottom. That was my nurse's training; all nurses are trained to walk very fast and purposefully and not wiggle their bottoms."

She nursed briefly, but was actually trained as a neurophysiologist at Yale, while she was there she wrote *Tim*, a novel about a handicapped young man, and then *The Thorn Birds*. This led to fame, fortune and a craving for privacy; and ultimately to Norfolk Island in the South Pacific, where she met and married, in 1984, Ric (full name Cedric, "and if you're going to be called Cedric, you'd better be 6ft 3in and 17 stone, which he is") Robinson.

He is a descendant of the Bounty mutineers, and is 13 years her junior. "But," she said, "actually he's much older than I am, a patriarchal

figure." They met while he was painting her house, but this was an interim occupation while he waited 14 years or so for his 30 acre crop of rare Kentia palms to reach maturity. "When that does happen, he'll out-rich me."

He also, she said, "out-strings" her. "He says, 'Hush your mouth, woman', and I shut up." (This is just a little hard to believe.) It was not love at first sight; two years elapsed between meeting and marriage. "I think that's the best way."

Now they live in Outyenna, a house and estate, on Norfolk Island — "it's like a small country, we support 25 families" — in somewhat oddball bliss. "I tuck him up every night at about nine or ten, and then I go to work." She works for ten, 12, sometimes 18 hours at a stretch. "Those are happy hours. I love it. I think all these writers who say they hate writing just want to make it appear more difficult. They think it sounds bad to say it's a

breeze." Was it a breeze for her? "Yes, sometimes it is. Sometimes it just goes. It's pure pleasure."

She is the very end of the line of her great, male dominated family. Her brother drowned 25 years ago. "It was frightful. Dreadful. The greatest grief I could ever face. We were best friends, only about 12 months apart, very attached to each other, more than to either parent. I came out the other end, but not without great difficulty. But that increased my confidence, that I could survive that."

So, here she is, at the age of 53, not quite at the black cigars and pink bloomer stage; successful, famous, seriously rich. She drew the illustrations for *The First Man in Rome* (which will be published on November 1 by Century, £14.99) and is writing the lyrics for a musical of *Tim*. Someone once called her a renaissance woman: "but I'm not. I'm renaissance man. Renaissance woman sat around doing embroidery and trying to please her man."

She is, she said, happy, hopeful, optimistic. What would she do if she lost all her money tomorrow? "Oh," she said, "I have a husband now. I would look to him." Isn't that cheating? "No it isn't," she said, "and I'll tell you something. He'd be as happy as a pig in shit to be the total breadwinner. But I don't think he'd subject me to asking him for the price of a pound of butter."

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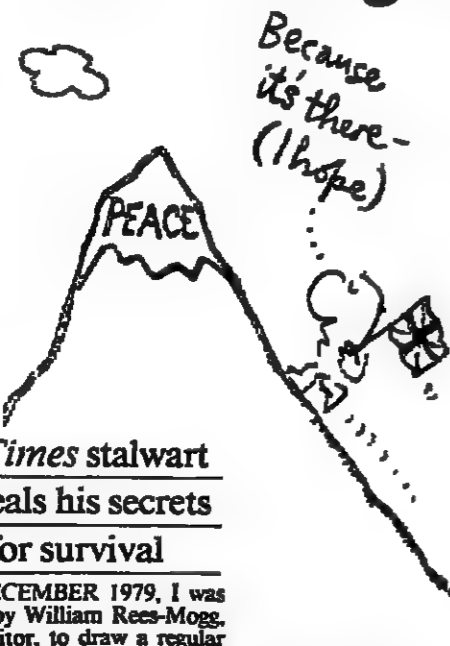
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Relishing the happy hours: Colleen McCullough sometimes works 18 hours at a stretch

Chuffed, chuffed.

calman Drawn to laughter



A Times stalwart reveals his secrets for survival

IN DECEMBER 1979, I was hired by William Rees-Mogg, the Editor, to draw a regular front-page cartoon for this newspaper. He was too shy to ask me himself, so Louis Heren, the deputy editor, was the one who took me to lunch and popped the question. It remains the only time I have been given lunch by a newspaper editor.

When I joined *The Times*, it was very much like entering a men's club, terribly genteel. For a while, I went to the afternoon conference, where the various heads of department sat in a semi-circle around Rees-Mogg, who occupied a large cane rocking chair and sipped China tea. Jokes were sometimes made — but they were usually either about old books or new cricketers. I used to show my cartoon ideas to the deputy editor, who referred them to Rees-Mogg only when the jokes were controversial — that is, about the Royal Family and the Catholic Church. A cartoon like the one I did a year or so ago, where a little girl is saying, "When I grow up I want to be Pope", would have been impossible in Rees-Mogg's day.

I cannot draw for a vast body of unknown people called readers. I draw for the Editor or more often the back bench, the name given to the motley crew who make all the

editorial decisions on a newspaper. If they have any glimmer of humour, all is well. If then do not (that is, if they do not like what I do), all is lost. If the editor does not like a cartoon, I start again.

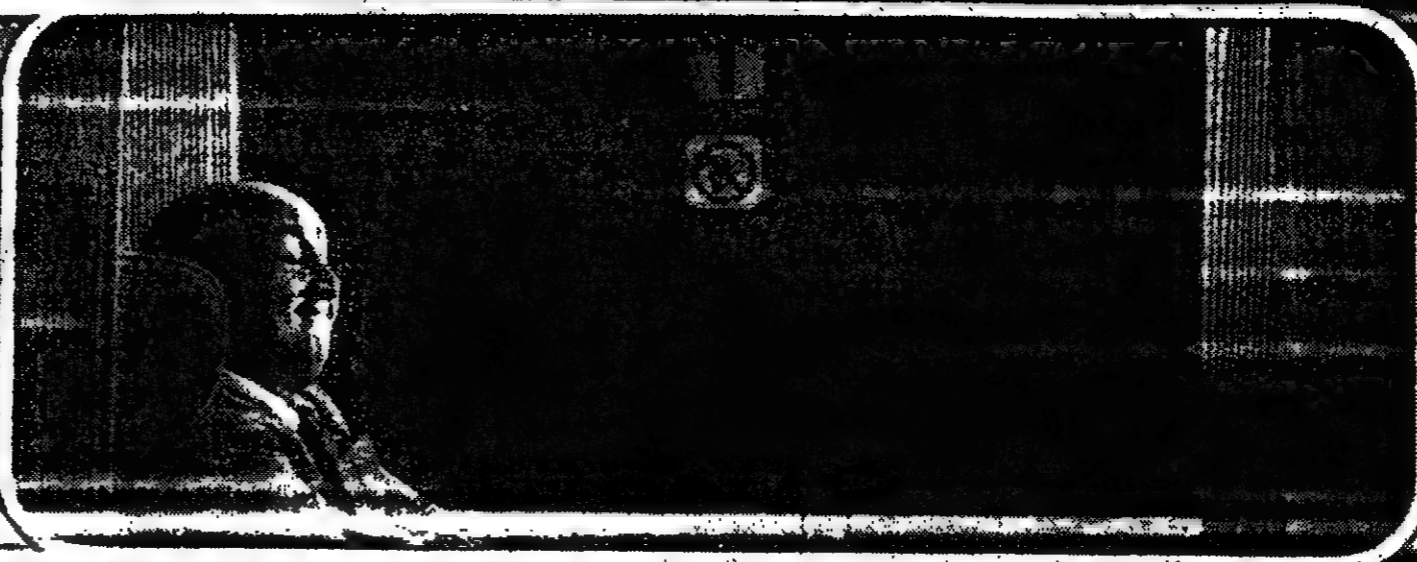
Before I begin drawing, I try to clarify my attitude to the subject: what is the general feeling out there? And if it is a long-running topic, how the devil can I find a fresh angle on it? Trying to be funny comes next. I'm not much good at being significant. I try to make a small pinprick in the portentous bubble of our leaders and their utterances.

I cannot imagine how I have survived this job for 11 years and five Editors. Mostly, I suspect, by keeping a low profile. It is a trick I learned in the army during national service, when I wanted to avoid extra guard duty. I come in each evening as quietly as possible, get the drawing done and accepted, and leave before anyone in authority can call me back to change it. I think I have not been fired simply because they forget I am there.

MEL CALMAN

© Merric England plc, a collection of Mel Calman's cartoons for *The Times*, is published on November 1 by Mandarin Paperbacks (£3.99).

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FESTIVAL: WEXFORD

Soprano makes the high note

Wexford has always been most at home with the operas of the 19th century. Steal a year and Leoncavallo's *Zaza*, first performed in 1900, will squeeze into that category. Like *Adriana Lecouvreur* and *Ariadne*, it begins backstage, with performers and hangers-on flirring and squabbling. But Leoncavallo's theatre is of a seedier kind, no more than vaudeville, in fact, and he clearly drew from his own experience of the days when he was a lowly rehearsal pianist. *Zaza* is the singer with the requisite two admirers, one her partner on the boards, Cascard, and the other, a stage-door-johnny newly arrived on the scene, called Milio. Would that Leoncavallo had been able to sustain the colour and bustle of this opening act. But his own text turns sentimental as *Zaza* discovers that Milio has a wife and family and, like Violetta, renounces him for the sake of good bourgeois propriety. He does, though, give himself a powerful third act, with a reflective aria for the tenor (Carreras recorded it not so long ago) and a grand final emotional scene of decision for *Zaza* herself.

This was carried off in masterly style by a young American soprano, Karen Notare, who is this year's Wexford discovery. Her full, unfettered singing, with the voice coloured in dark shades when required, would make her a natural for Puccini in general and *Manon Lescaut* in particular. The career looks set to take off. Claude-Robin Pelletier sang suavely as *Zaza*'s new lover and John Cimino warmly as her old one. There were no weaknesses in the cast, sharply directed by Jamie Hayes in sets by Ruari Murchison, which gave the tiny Wexford stage seemingly impossible perspective. Bruno Rigucci made the score sound better than it probably is, in an evening which pulled forgotten *Zaza* well above her own vaudeville level.

Boieldieu's *La Dame blanche* (1825) is even more firmly anchored in its own time. It was once hugely popular, admired by Weber and even Wagner. But the libretto cobbled together by Scribe, if that is not an insult to cobblers, from an assortment of Scott novels has even less thrust than that of *Zaza*. The white lady of the title is an apparition who turns out to be real flesh and blood, so much so that at the close of the rambling third act she lays just claim to the castle she haunts and the rich young man she wants to marry.

The French producer Jean-Claude Auvray, back in Wexford after a lengthy absence, remains true to the simple sentiments of the story while being careful to enliven the duller passages. Wisely, he cuts out swathes of

spoken dialogue and pushes things along as fast as they will go, although the pace is not exactly breakneck. He is abetted by the festival's second clutch of imaginative designs, this time by Kenny MacLellan, who dresses a fantasy Scotland in shades of grey and white.

Boieldieu is at his best in the big concerted numbers, notably the auction scene which closes the second act, with the Wexford chorus (much improved in recent years) in top form. The solo writing owes much to Rossini and makes similar vocal demands. Mariette Kemmer, in the title role, was well up to them in this vintage year for sopranos. Jorge de Leon, as her childhood sweetheart Georges Brown, was not only a small tenor emerged from his handsome, muscular frame, and even that was a hit-and-miss affair on opening night. Again, there was an impressive supporting cast, led by Gillian Knight as a gurgling old servant and Andre Cognet as the villain who is not even allowed an aria. Emmanuel Joel was the lively young conductor.

A still lingering commitment to the 20th century, and an Irish setting, County Mayo in 1875, were probably behind the decision to revive Nicholas Maw's *The Rising of the Moon*. Everyone was very friendly to it when first seen at Glyndebourne precisely 20 years ago, but it did not exactly win a place in the communal heart. Beverly Cross's libretto of the young officer who has to win his military spurs in smoking, carousing and seducing within a single night was too thin, and Maw's orchestration too thick. A comedy in which the words are inaudible, and quite often none too singable, is no comedy. On revival the orchestra was thinned out a bit, but not sufficiently, and the lesson has not been learnt at Wexford.

Simon Joly conducted an unreasonably raucous performance and the singers had to bellow across the orchestra when they should have been nudging chuckles from the audience. The Irish contingent came off better than the visiting English military, which is, perhaps, as it should be for a home fixture. Francis Egerton was the crafty monk who opens and closes the tale, and Pamela Stephen the colleen who provides a brief love affair in between the obligatory seductions. Mark Calkins, as the young officer, looked relieved at the end when he left the 31st Royal Lancers; and who would not be? The production, by Ceri Sherlock, was not in the same league as the other two evenings and *The Rising of the Moon* can now be put back to rest for another few years. The moon also sets.

JOHN HIGGINS

Karen Notare and Claude-Robin Pelletier in *Zaza*

LITERATURE

Reflections on the screen

William Goldman, whose latest novel lifts the lid on the Cannes Film Festival and the Miss America pageant, talks to Clive Davis

Drop William Goldman's name into a conversation in film circles, and the chances are he will be described as "the man who wrote that wonderful book". The work in question is *Adventures in the Screen Trade*, an exposé of the inner workings of the American film industry.

Yet there are other ways of describing him. He was the Oscar-winning screenwriter on *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *All the President's Men*. He has written an acclaimed nuts-and-bolts account of the Broadway theatre. He is the author of *The Princess Bride*, a much-loved children's tale. And he is a commercial novelist, whose use of cinematic techniques has won praise from American critics.

At a more trivial level, he can claim to be the only person to have been a judge, in the same year, at both the Cannes Film Festival and the Miss America beauty pageant. A dubious honour, perhaps, but it forms the basis for his new book, *Hype & Glory*, another cocktail of gossip, reportage and autobiography. The book also has a more serious strand: the disintegration of his marriage after 27 years. At the close, he is groping towards a new life as a single man.

Goldman did his duty at Cannes and Atlantic City in 1988. He writes about his experiences with his customary verve, throwing in screenplay-style dialogue and New York street-talk. The Danish film *Felle the Conqueror* won his vote for the Palme d'Or at Cannes. At the pageant he was transfixed by Miss Colorado and Miss Mississippi, but saw the prize go to a fiddle-playing "God-clutch" from Minnesota. The tackiness and solemnity reminded him of the Academy Awards ceremony. And he loved it. "It's spectacularly tasteless. It's a throwback to an earlier time, when we Americans believed in the virtues we knew we didn't have."

We meet in his discreetly furnished pied-à-terre in Knightsbridge. The setting already seems familiar from the description in *Hype & Glory*: "too small bedrooms, a make-do kitchen, a glorious living room overlooking a square". It is a long way from the madness of Hollywood, the place that Goldman seems to love and loathe in equal measure. Three years after the film version of *The Princess Bride*, he returns to the limelight next month when his new film, *Misery*, opens in America. It is an adaptation of one of Stephen King's non-horror stories, directed by Rob Reiner, who was also in charge on the screen adaptation of *The Princess Bride*.

and King's story *Stand by Me*.

When Goldman wrote the final chapter of *Adventures*, in the summer of 1982, he spoke of the "greatest time of panic and despair in modern Hollywood history". The only runaway hit of the year at that point had been *Porky's*. Today, Hollywood seems awash with commercial success. Writers are commanding unheard-of fees.

Goldman ought to be overjoyed; he is not. "I've often thought that my favourite directors when I was growing up couldn't work now. I don't know what pictures have been made in recent years that Elia Kazan could have directed. Or Billy Wilder. Or George Stevens."

"For better or for worse — and I think for worse — America dominates world movies as never before in film history. The British don't want to see British films, the French don't want to see French films. Audiences want to see big, dopey movies with action and adventure. Body-count films. We spend a lot of money on making them, and we're good at them."

Not that Goldman is an uncritical admirer of European "art house" cinema. Though he adores *Pelle the Conqueror* and *Cinema Paradiso*, his patience can run short at times. Hence his description, in *Hype & Glory*, of *A Short Film About Killing*: "a greenish-tinted Polish film about a punk who kills a cab driver for no reason, but the murder takes, oh, 15 minutes."

Obscurity is one of his pet hates. He tries to make his own prose as accessible as possible. ("My greatest panic is that people will stop reading. That's why I have so many one-word paragraphs. I want to jerk your eye around.") In 1964, when he was still a novelist, he wrote a novel called *No Way to Treat a Lady*, with 53 chapters spread across just 160 pages. The novel caught the eye of the actor Cliff Robertson, who happened to be looking for a writer to work on a screenplay. The two men had a meeting, and Goldman's screenwriting career was born. The irony was that Robertson thought Goldman's book was a film "treatment" rather than a novel.

After so many years honing his craft, Goldman has a distrust of theorising, especially on the part of critics. His famous maxim is "nobody knows anything".

The Season, his 1969 book about Broadway, outlines his philosophy in the course of an inspired demolition job on the cult of Harold Pinter. Goldman opens with an extract from an early Pinter play, followed by a



Goldman: for better or for worse, America dominates world movies as never before in film history

dense piece of symbolic analysis from one of Kenneth Tynan's columns. Only much later does he reveal that both pieces are fakes. It is a neat piece of legerdemain, of the kind which crops up throughout his work. Of course, he runs the risk of being regarded as a Joe Six-Pack philistine.

"Look, my favourite writers aren't Jacqueline Susann or Mickey Spillane. They're Chekhov and all the Russians, and Cervantes, etcetera. I happen to like Pinter's stuff. I just hate all that talk about 'the unspoken

menace'. It doesn't matter: the art-object matters. The point is: do you care about what's happening up on stage?"

"I remember the first time I read *Don Quixote*. I was a college senior. When I realised that he was going to die, I threw the book across the room. I'd been so caught up in it and so thrilled that I wanted it to go on forever. Well, if you don't give a cuss whether the *Don* dies, the book doesn't work."

His candour must have made

him unpopular in some quarters. *Adventures*, *The Season* and *Hype & Glory* contain unflattering portraits of such luminaries as Dustin Hoffman, Mike Nichols and Al Pacino. Was he aware that, as a screenwriter, he might be making some powerful enemies? He shrugs his shoulders. The entertainment industry, he says sadly, is full of lies and deceit: for an author to add any more would be immoral.

● *Hype & Glory* is published by Macdonald at £12.95.

TELEVISION

Comfort for the overweight and alcoholic?

THERE was more plot in the first five minutes of *The Green Man* on BBC 1 last night than I suspect we shall get in all 12 remaining hours of *Twin Peaks*. A woman, walking through a forest in the dead of night, gets suddenly and revoltingly disembowelled by a murderous tree. Back in the chic restaurant of the title, Albert Finney is waking up from a menopausal alcoholic nightmare. Along the corridor Sir Michael Horden is doing his celebrated impression of a dying walrus. All may not be well, although soon enough there are all the reassuringly familiar trappings of *Amis the Elder*.

A book first published 20 years ago, when Finney himself bought the screen rights, this is *Amis on his long march from *Lucky Jim* to *The Old Devils*. Finney is the personification as well as the owner of "The Green Man", suddenly enmeshed in a mid-life crisis, when sex and alcohol and death come together to demand resolution before nightfall.*

As if all that were not enough to worry about, Finney has Bernard Levin and Clement Freud coming to taste his wine-list, while there is

the ghost of a Jacobean wife-killer lurking in the shrubbery and the doctor's nubile wife needing attention in a nearby field. Thus, as well as all the guilt about the eating and the drinking and the sex and the overdrafts, we also get Finney in his most familiar and characteristic role, that of a man who has somehow mislaid his career.

Elijah Moshinsky's production is as theatrical in its casting as its special effects, and the result looks much like a Hammer House of Horror movie that has mysteriously been shot in the Garrick Club on Ladies' Night.

There are two more weeks to go on this, and we have not even yet met the gay vicar with the thing about exorcisms. But all the old *Amis* demons are in place.

"He is just over 50," says Nicky Henson as the doctor, about Finney the fast-fading. "It is just when the road starts to go very sharply downhill for quite a while." That's the kind of line those of us born around 1940 are going to be worrying about at least until the end of the series.

Reassurance, however, came from Saturday's *Fat Man* in Argentina on Channel 4. Tom

Vernon, a reporter who unusually but splendidly seems to be almost exactly my age, weight and girth, propels himself very slowly around the world on a large bicycle, asking questions of locals who seem to have a day or two to waste shooting the breeze with an amiable foreigner.

Vernon started his bicycling on Radio 4, where it was only possible to guess at his shape from the faint wheezing noises which would accompany his cycle up foreign hills. Since then, the BBC has belatedly appointed a kind of cultural security officer, to stop the best of its radio talent escaping over the walls of Broadcasting House, but too late to preserve Vernon, who was already half way round Argentina with a film crew. He managed to spend the whole hour this week hardly mentioning the Falklands at all, contenting himself instead with the occasional vague inquiry about whether Eva Peron was popular, or why the gauchos cover their bulls (and I do mean bulls) with mayonnaise.

Deeply rooted in the cosy radio conventions of *Down Your Way*, Vernon only ever asks questions

which would be acceptable to the most elderly and conservative of parish priests, and his social or political discoveries are thus not spectacular. But his corpulent

charm is considerable: I am thinking of buying myself a bicycle and a tape recorder for the next summer holidays.

SHERIDAN MORLEY

CHRISTIE'S

THIS portrait of the Victorian painter Stanley Montefiore was executed by Henry Stacy Marks, one of the founders of the St John's Wood Clique. Marks was a notorious practical joker and was criticised by Ruskin who for allowing this side of his character to impede his art. His studio sale was held by Christie's after his death in 1898. This painting will be included in the sale of Victorian Pictures, Drawings and Watercolours at Christie's, King Street on Thursday 1 and Friday 2 November.

For further information on this and other sales, in the next week, please telephone Christie's 24-hour Auction Information Service on (071) 839 9060.

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THE TIMES
EDUCATIONAL

MAINLY CHRISTIAN?

The Education Reform Act was meant to rescue school worship from a 'mish-mash of collectivism'. Has it succeeded? News Focus investigates.

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT
- Friday -

ARTS

Yanks to go home

AMERICAN plays may be bound in London, but few of them are drawing the punters. That is demonstrated by the imminent closures of August Wilson's *Fences* and A.R. Gurney's *Love Letters*. The former received warm reviews but never won over the West End public, which is traditionally lukewarm about all-black drama. The latter was warmly received, although the producers hope to bring it back in the new year with a fresh set of stars.

Of interest will be what happens to the shows chosen to replace them, since neither is an obvious commercial bet. The Garrick next gets the revival of Jean Anouilh's *The Rehearsal* with Nicola Pagetti, fresh from his run at the Almeida. Wyndham's, meanwhile, inherits the much admired Chichester production of Ingmar Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage*, with its Sussex stars, Penny Downie and Alan Howard.

Going Dutch
ONE of the Royal Ballet's senior dancers, Wayne Eagling, is leaving Covent Garden to become artistic director of the Dutch National Ballet. Eagling, who takes over his new job next September, will succeed Rudi van Dantzig, who wants to devote more time to writing, after having considerable success with his first novel. Van Dantzig will, however, remain as resident choreographer.

The National Ballet had hoped for another Dutch director. Two candidates were being groomed, but first Henry Jurriens was killed in a road accident and then Hans Ebelaar quit ballet when his ballerina wife Alexandra Radu retired earlier this year. Eagling has signed a three-year contract: too early to reveal plans, he says.

Musical fellow
THAT veteran creator of care-free musical comedy, Vivian Ellis, is 86 today. He is about to receive a fellowship from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama — a recognition not just of his compositional charms (*Bless the Bride*, *Mr Cinders*), but of his work campaigning for other composers as president of the Performing Right Society, and of his encouragement of young composers. With apt timing, the winner of the first Vivian Ellis Prize for new musicals, back in 1985, is about to receive a London production: *Just So*, by George Sittes and Anthony Drewe (based on Kipling), is now in rehearsal at the Tricycle, Kilburn.

Eastern promise
RECENT events in Eastern Europe are the inspiration behind the London Sinfonietta's adventurous South Bank series, "Explorations", which starts tomorrow. The four concerts will put new music by British composers alongside that of Poles, Romanians and East Germans, with six world premieres and seven British premieres in all.

Górecki's setting of Shakespeare's "Good night... light of angels sing thee to thy rest", first heard at the memorial concert for the Sinfonietta's previous artistic director Michael Vyrer in May, will now be heard complete with its other movements. Works of George Benjamin, H. K. Gruber and Franco Donatoni are also in store.

Stars line up

AFTER devoting yesterday to Arthur Miller's 75th birthday celebrations, the Young Vic today begins an amazing week of theatrical events: 12 a day for the next seven days: talks, workshops, plays and master classes. The aim is to raise more cash to keep the theatre going through its current financial troubles.

Dorothy Tutin, Edward Fox and Ben Kingsley appear in various items today; tomorrow features Sussanah York in Coccia's *The Human Voice*, later in the week there is a Peter Barnes premiere set in the guts of a London hotel. Chichester's gripping production of *Thérèse Raquin*, John Cleese talking about *Wanda* and (on Saturday) Michael Maloney and Bob Peck in Jack Shepherd's excellent play about William Blake and Tom Payne: *In Lambeth*. And there are 64 other events — Diana Quick, Michael Palin, several Clusacks. Young Vic Festival hotline: 071-633 0133.



Sussanah York: aid for Vic

Wales in Japan
IN TOKYO to attend the enthronement of the Emperor of Japan, the Prince and Princess of Wales will also lend support to British culture. They will attend a performance of *Salome* given by Welsh National Opera, which is touring Japan for the UK90 festival of British culture.

Last chance...

SINCE the Royal Shakespeare Company closes the Barbican Theatre and the Pit on Saturday — and may not re-open either until February — this is a week of last chances at its metropolitan Oz. Gorky's *Barbarians* and Michael Hastings' *Dream of People* both end tomorrow; Howard Brenon and Tariq Ali's homage to Gorbachev, *Moscow Gold*, and Shakespeare's *Pericles* close on Thursday; Peter Flannery's *Singer* and Paula Milne's *Earwig* on Saturday. The least missable is probably Flannery's blend of moral rumination and social cartoon: a big, sprawling play notable for Antony Sher's glittering performance in the title role, a property shark based on Rachman.

THEATRE

Fine sense of the ridiculous

A two-man burlesque melodrama, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, opens tomorrow in the West End. Benedict Nightingale recalls the extraordinary career of the late Charles Ludlam, its author

THE ending of his play, *Camille*, was the quintessence of Charles Ludlam. Marguerite hacked out her last tubercular breaths in a painfully realistic style. Armand wailed in manly grief over her body. But something was not quite normal. She had a large nose, big hands and a hairy chest, and was, as it happened, played by the author himself. And Armand's lamentations came to a quivering climax with the words, "toodle-oo, Marguerite".

Unsurprisingly, the listeners laughed, and did so again when the moment was recalled at a memorial service for Ludlam back in 1987, the year he died. He was 44 and had made his Ridiculous Theatre Company the kind of cult that is possible only in California guru country or among the dramaphiles of New York. Tomorrow London gets the chance to discover what it was that drew the famous and the fashionable to the tatty 143-seat basement in Greenwich Village that is now called the Charles Ludlam Theatre.

Ludlam's *Mystery of Irma Vep*, at the Ambassadors, is a burlesque melodrama indebted to Conan Doyle, Poe, Daphne du Maurier, most of the Brontës and the Ibsen of *Rosmersholm*, among others. When it was first performed in New York, back in 1984, the author himself took half the roles, including Lady Hillcrest, the agonised mistress of the fog-shrouded grange Mandacrest, and a deformed butler called Nicodemus. Ludlam's lover, Everett Quinton, played the other parts.

This gothic knockabout has

since been performed from Idaho to Alaska, and remains Ridiculous Theatre's biggest commercial success; but Ludlam wrote nearly 30 plays in the 23 years he belonged to the company, some of them zanier as well as more ambitious. His early *Conquest of the Universe*, for instance, was a parody of Marlowe's *Tambraine*, with a hero who got so bored with grabbing continents he started conquering galaxies instead. The character had its resemblances to Ludlam, whose satiric embrace extended from *King Lear* to *Finnegans Wake*, old movies to grand opera, Kabuki to French farce to vaudeville.

The son of a Long Island plasterer, Ludlam was always restless and rebellious, and once said he would have become a criminal but for a fascination with *our* spectacle that began early. When he was six, he was taken to a fair to see armless black dwarves painting pictures with their toes. Fifteen years later, he discovered his own freak-show. He joined the Ridiculous Theatre, an off-off-Broadway company in the process of evolving "from the absurd to the absolutely preposterous", to play Peeping Tom in its *Lady Godiva*.

Soon, he had become the theatre's director, writer and star, and was building up a permanent troupe of performers with names such as Black-Eyed Susan and Mink Stole. At first they played on a rough wooden platform in a bar, raided rubbish tips for their props and costumes and regarded themselves as subsidised by the New York Welfare Department. The



Gothic knockabout: Nicholas Grace (left) and Edward Hibbert in *The Mystery of Irma Vep*

story goes that Ludlam qualified for financial support after going to see a city psychiatrist, who thought his claims to be a theatre director were evidence of mental disturbance.

Much nudity, bawdy and cross-dressing characterised these, the Ridiculous's most anarchic years. The audiences were predominantly homosexual, and saw the company as a savage campaigner for gay rights. That was not Ludlam's intention, but he admitted later that "nothing was too far out for me. I wanted to outrage." It was the period of his *Turds in Hell*, of which little but the title is remembered, and his *When Queens*

Collide, in which transvestites came from all over New York to join a dance of Maritan firewomen.

As the Seventies progressed, he decided to become more mainstream. His work was now less wild, more structured, if still pretty scurrilous. In *Bluebeard*, he appeared with fez and gaudily painted chin-whiskers to play a mad scientist dedicated to inventing a "new and gentler genital". Then came *Eunuchs of the Forbidden City* — "I don't think of myself as castrated, just as extremely well circumcised" — and *Camille*.

With that, the critics began to take Ludlam seriously. The *New York Times* proclaimed his *Marguerite* "no facile female impersonation, but a real performance". There were

reportedly nights when he got so carried away that he had to hide his deathbed sobs from the audience. Somehow he was able to keep the laughter going while, in his words, "going into a trance onstage and believing in my role completely". If this was high camp, it was also high-class camp.

Ludlam once wrote a manifesto for his "Ridiculous Theatre. Scourge of Human Folly". "Test out a dangerous idea, a theme that threatens to destroy one's whole value system," he ordered. "Treat the material in a madly farcical manner without losing the seriousness of the theme."

His earlier work was hardly so earnest in intention, nor was his later stuff so subversive. But both combined a lunatic

extravagance of idea with the physical and verbal derring-do it needed. As a friend said after he died, audiences arrived expecting far too much of him, "and he readily obliged".

At his death, Ludlam was writing a play about Houdini ("a piece of pure escapism") and preparing to direct *Titus Andronicus* for the New York Shakespeare Festival. What killed him was AIDS-related pneumonia, which he reportedly fought by placing live carp on his chest. Even his ideas about medicine were unorthodox. Even his end had its comedy.

● *The Mystery of Irma Vep* opens tomorrow at the Ambassadors Theatre, West Street, London WC2 (071-836 6111)

DANCE

Bringing a touch of Broadway to the classics

Gregory Osborne, principal guest dancer with English National Ballet, talks to Debra Craine

IF being a Broadway star means singing, dancing and acting, Gregory Osborne has at least made it two out of three. There is no singing in his life, but as principal guest artist with English National Ballet, there is plenty of dancing and acting, even if it is of the fairytale kind. Touring the regional theatres of Britain may be a far cry from the lights of the Great White Way he once dreamed about, yet Osborne is right where he wants to be. "I always wanted to be in show business and in a way I am because in classical ballet you're doing a play: it's theatre. I think I bring a touch of Broadway to my performances."

Certainly the role of the jealous poet Lensky, danced by the American visitor in ENB's production of John Cranko's ballet *Olegin*, gives him a part strong enough to indulge his thespian leanings. By comparison, the male leads he performs in *Coppelia* and *The Nutcracker* might be considered cardboard cutout characters. But Osborne is not put off; he believes the 19th-century classical ballets still have something to say.

"Those who say the prince-roles are two-dimensional are not looking deep enough," he says. "Classical ballets are like Greek plays, their characters have the same sort of tragic flaws. And I find they have total relevance today; human nature is human nature whether it's 1800, 1900 or the year 2000. When I do, these

ballets I take them as being real, even though they are a fantasy. I don't know how people can say these are shallow, boring pieces of work. They're not doing their homework."

The 35-year-old Osborne has spent years doing his homework, first as a rising star of American Ballet Theatre, then as Erik Bruhn's golden boy at the National Ballet of Canada. He comes to ENB after a year on the road, pursuing a successful career as an international guest artist. Now he is in Britain "for as long as I could possibly be."

Despite his reputation as a ballet "prince", the *Swan Lake* and *Giselle* came late in Osborne's life. At ABT, where director Mikhail Baryshnikov was turning the repertoire away from the classics, the young soloist found himself dancing mostly in contemporary works. "I knew I was being groomed for a principal when I left, but my problem was the repertoire had changed and I was looking at contemporary ballet as my future. There were not a lot of opportunities to learn about the classics. For me the logical next step was to be the prince, but suddenly I felt my information was very limited in those ballets."

When Bruhn invited Osborne to join him at the National Ballet of Canada, the young dancer leaped at the chance to work closely with the great Danish *dansur noble*. In Toronto, under the guidance of his new mentor, Osborne found himself being groomed as a true classical dancer. "With Erik and his company I did every major classical ballet there is. I got my information."

Osborne also got his much dreamed-about Broadway break when, in his early twenties, he auditioned for Bob Fosse's *Dancin'*. "I always wanted to be a Broadway star. I think it's part of being an American. Growing up in

the States, you saw Busby Berkeley, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and Shirley Temple. We grew up with all that stuff and it put a little bug in you as a child. Little by little, people guided me subtly into the classical idiom more and more, but I never felt like I had specifically made a choice so I think a bit of me

always pulls me towards the Broadway stage." Fosse offered him the lead in *Dancin'*. "At about four times the money I was making in the ABT corps," but when the ballet company offered him a soloist's contract, Osborne decided to stay put.

That was not the end of his show business career. In Can-

ada, Osborne was chosen to play the lead in a film called *Shadow Dancing*. "Let's just say it was a great experience. I loved doing the movie, but unfortunately the film got cut up in the editing room and it lost its initial *raison d'être* so it didn't turn out so well. I think my work was good in it."

Did the experience put him

off show business once and for all? Definitely not: those childhood visions of Busby Berkeley still beckon. "Sure, I would make another movie. I'll look at any offers; I'm accepting scripts now, and that includes the West End." Meanwhile, "I think it's time for ballet to groom princes once again."

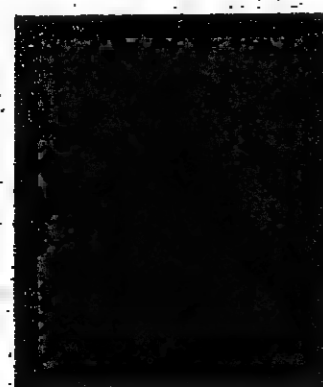
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NEC

شماره ۱۵۰۰

Will the bubble burst?

Education will be one of the main battle grounds in the next general election, with all parties claiming the answers to falling standards and demoralised teachers. One of the skirmishes will be over the future of independent schools.

At present, they are alive and well and managing to resist the economic pressure caused by high mortgage rates. They teach about 7 per cent of the country's children, with the figure rising to 20 per cent in the sixth form.

However, rising fees could halt an increase in those moving out of the state system. Average fees this year are £3,000 for day schools and £9,000 for boarding. The biggest demand is for the large day schools, particularly in London, where there are often five or six candidates for every place.

The question is, will this demand remain, or will the government's education reforms begin to improve schools to the extent that parents will stay in the state system? Independent schools see this as a possibility, which is why they have adopted the National Curriculum.

Arthur Hearn, the secretary of the Independent Schools Joint Council, says: "We have to adapt to what is going on in the mainstream of education if we are to remain a part of it. Our schools cater for a range of pupils, not just the high-flyers. Some of them are exclusively academic, some are not. It is not a question of better or worse, but of dealing with the kind of children we have."

Life under a Labour government would be tougher, but not

Independent schools are flourishing, but their fortunes are linked to education policy, which can change at any time, David Tytler reports

impossible. The biggest concern for independent schools would be the cancellation of the assisted-places scheme, which subsidises fees for less well-off parents. Of the 474,000 pupils in independent schools, 67,000 receive scholarships or bursaries, with 30,000 on assisted places.

Labour would abolish the scheme. The schools insist they are more concerned with the impact abolition would have on the mix of their schools, rather than the economic consequences. Dr Hearn says: "If assisted places are phased out, we would be forced into being exclusive."

The independent schools have figures to show that pupils with assisted places are among the brightest they have, a statistic that can also be used by the state schools to show that they are being robbed of their brightest stars.

SELECTION FACTORS	%
Discipline	88
Encouraging a study attitude	77
Flexibility	70
Developing social responsibility	69
Small classes	66
School right for the child	65
Artistic and musical activities	56
Science and technical facilities	55
Sports opportunities	54

Source: Market and Opinion Research International (MORI)

Independent schools pride themselves on their A-level passes, which average at about 45 per cent in A and B grades; assisted-place pupils can claim 52 per cent. At GCSE, the pass rate at A-C is 66 per cent, while assisted-place pupils claim 70 per cent.

The independent schools worry that only about 82 per cent of available assisted places are taken up. David Smith, the headteacher at the £2,750-a-year co-educational Bradford Grammar School, says: "The only flaw with the scheme is the low take-up in some areas. It might be that there are too many schools fishing in the same pond. There may be competition from state schools, or it may be that publicity is not good enough."

Kenneth Baker, the Conservative party chairman, has upset the schools with a letter from Central Office asking all 295 inde-

ASSISTED PLACES TAKE-UP	%
Northwest	72
Southeast	75
Greater London	77
Yorkshire/Humber/Side	80
East Anglia	80
East Midlands	87
West Midlands	88
Northwest	88
Southwest	88

Source: Market and Opinion Research International (MORI)

pendent schools operating the assisted-places scheme to provide lists of parents being helped. Most heads refused, believing that disclosure would break confidentiality between schools and parents.

There is no doubt that the influence of the independent schools would diminish under Labour, but at the moment they are able to influence the government out of all proportion to their numbers. The recent decision by John MacGregor, the education secretary, to allow schools to continue to teach the three sciences separately, rather than the double-award balanced science favoured by the School Examinations and Assessment Council (Seac), owes much to the influence of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC), which represents 230 of the leading independent schools.

Seac may come to grief again on the rock of the HMC, which has recently expressed its dislike of the council's proposals for reforming A-levels, the "gold standard" of the education system, to bring them more into line with the GCSE. The headmasters say that a move to course-work, coupled with a weakening of academic disciplines, will undermine the examination and reduce standards.

Parents give many reasons for choosing the independent schools, with one in five saying that they have been dissatisfied with state education. David Woodhead, the director of Isis, says: "The picture that emerges is of a highly critical body of parents looking at schools on their merits and choosing what is best for their children."



Bradford Grammar School, West Yorkshire: life would be tougher under Labour, but not impossible

INDEPENDENT EDUCATION

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM ENTRY 1991

Scholarships and a limited number of ordinary places are available for boys of high academic ability wishing to enter the Sixth Form in September 1991.

There are four Scholarships (each a worth half fee and may be supplemented where parental income meets the necessary). Admission is by examination and interview held on the weekend of Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd February 1991. Full details may be obtained from:

The Headmaster, Shrewsbury School,
The School, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 7BA
Telephone: (0143) 4537

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Full details are available from the Headmistress's Secretary
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SHROPSHIRE
PRINCIPAL

The Governing Council invites applications for the post of Principal from September 1991, following the retirement of Mr. E. J. Camell.

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Further details of the school and the post can be obtained from:

The Clerk to the Council
Moreton Hall
Wenau Rhys, Oswestry
Shropshire SY11 3EW
Telephone: 0691 773671
Fax: 0691 778552

Closing date for receipt of applications is the 19th November 1990.

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Tel: 0833 43386

Girls ages 4-18 day
GUILDWOOD EDGE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
London Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1ST
Tel: (043) 61440

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Sunbury Crescent, Kingston-upon-Thames KT1 2JT
Tel: 081 446 3245

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HULL HIGH SCHOOL
Trinity Cross, Anlaby, North Humberside HU10 7EH
Tel: 0482 657016

Girls ages 3-18 day
Ages 8-18 boarding
Boys ages 3-8 day
SLUNDERLAND CHURCHES EDGE SCHOOL
Mowbray Road, Sunderland SR2 6JY
Tel: 091 567 4994

Girls ages 4-18 day
Boys 11th form day
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Low Petergate, York, YO1 2HZ
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- The ELEVEN PLUS Junior Scholarship examinations will take place 4/5th February 1991. The THIRTEEN PLUS Rossall Scholarship examinations will take place on 4/7th March 1991.
- In addition, this School offers a number of MUSIC Scholarships at eleven plus and thirteen plus, which include FREE tuition in two instruments, and an ART & DESIGN scholarship at thirteen plus.
- If you would like further details of any of these Scholarships, or to learn more about Rossall, please contact:

The Admissions Office (91/8), Rossall School,
FLEETWOOD FY7 8JW Tel: Fleetwood (03917) 6116

ROSSALL

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Further particulars may be obtained from Peter J Hill, Director of Personnel, University of Bath, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7AY, telephone 0225-826026

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Tertia Allan on
071-481 1066

Source: UK NRS January 1990 - June 1990.
THE SUNDAY TIMES

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An untimely leap out of the history books

Match report, page 34
Hanley profile, page 16